

2019-2020 School Action Fund - Planning

COMPETITIVE GRANT Application Due 5:00 p.m. CT, May 2; 2019

NOGAID

Authorizing legislation

Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by P.L. 114-95, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Title I, Part A, Section 1003, School Improvement

Applicants must submit one original copy of the application and two copies of the application (for a total of three copies of the application). All three copies of the application MUST bear the signature of a person authorized to bind the applicant to a contractual agreement. Applications cannot be emailed. Applications must be received no later than the above-listed application due date and time at:

Document Control Center, Grants Administration Division

Texas Education Agency

1701 N. Congress Avenue

Austin, TX 78701-1494

Grant	period	from

July 1, 2019 to July 31, 2020

Pre-award costs are not permitted.

Required Attachments

No attachments are required to be submitted with this application.

Amendment Number

Amendment number (For amendments only; enter N/A when completing this form to apply for grant funds):

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ESC 3 CDN 235902 DUNS 069468114 Organization Victoria ISD Vendor ID 746002453 Address 102 Profit Drive Victoria 77901 Phone |361-576-3131 Primary Contact Dr. Susanne Carroll Phone |361-788-2896 Email susanne.carroll@visd.net Secondary Contact Tammy Sestak Phone 361-788-2890 tammy.sestak@visd.net Email

Certification and Incorporation

I understand that this application constitutes an offer and, if accepted by TEA or renegotiated to acceptance, will form a binding agreement. I hereby certify that the information contained in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and that the organization named above has authorized me as its representative to obligate this organization in a legally binding contractual agreement. I certify that any ensuing program and activity will be conducted in accordance and compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

I further certify my acceptance of the requirements conveyed in the following portions of the grant application, as applicable, and that these documents are incorporated by reference as part of the grant application and Notice of Grant Award (NOGA):

- □ Debarment and Suspension Certification

□ General Provisions and Assurances

- |X| Application-specific Provisions and Assurances
- **☒** ESSA Provisions and Assurances requirements

Authorized Official Name Dr. Quintin Shepherd Title Superintendent Phone | 361-788-9202 Email |quintin.shepherd@visd.net Signature Date 05/01/2019

Grant Writer Name | Dr. Susanne Carroll

Signature /

Date 05/01/2014

Application stamp-in date and time

• Grant writer is an employee of the applicant organization.

C Grant writer is **not** an employee of the applicant organization.

RFA # 701-19-107 SAS # 438-20

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Shared Services Arrangements



SSAs are **not permitted** for this grant.

Identify/Address Needs

List up to three quantifiable needs, as identified in your needs assessment, that these program funds will address. Describe your plan for addressing each need.

Quantifiable Need	Plan for Addressing Need
For the 2018-19 school year, 5 VISD elementary campuses were identified for Comprehensive School Improvement and 8 elementary campuses were on the list for under-performing in the Domain of Closing Student Gaps. Eco. Dis. rate for district (66.4%)	VISD would like to use funds to explore options to improve academic achievement through expansion of early childhood by utilizing a partnership model and utilizing elements from the ACE re-start model to open a campus that will be closing during the 2019-2020 school year.
standards, 2017 Reading 35% and 2018 Reading 29%	The goal is to use funds to possibly add Extended Learning time within the school day at the Early Childhood Center, and provide an emphasis on Social and Emotional Supports and Parent and Community Partnerships, which have been proven to be important factors in increasing student achievement.
prekindergarten students are scoring below 70% in the areas of vocabulary, alliteration,	Exploring and opening a Early Child Partnership with an ESC or University. With a Early Childhood Partnership, VISD can focus its efforts on holding Early Childhood partner accountable for student results while Partner can focus on day-to day management and operations for high quality Instruction.

SMART Goal

Describe the summative SMART goal you have identified for this program (a goal that is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely), either related to student outcome or consistent with the purpose of the grant.

By Summer of 2020, VISD will have identified their "best fit" bold School Action to pursue for all students on an Early Childhood campus and secured Implementation Continuation funding for this specific bold School Action by meeting all the Exploratory Planning Implementation Milestones on the Fidelity Implementation Tool. While the SMART goal meets the specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely acronym criteria, it is a process SMART goal. The ultimate SMART goal after selection of the bold school action will be focused on student achievement.

Measurable Progress

Identify the benchmarks that you will use at the end of the first three grant quarters to measure progress toward meeting the process and implementation goals defined for the grant.

First-Quarter Benchmark

Victoria ISD's Board will have identified a school action project manager, analyze best practice design for internal leaders, begin to design appropriate communication materials and conduct a robust Call for Quality Schools based on Policy ELA (Local). VISD will complete fidelity of implementation revisions with the matched school action technical assistance provider on or before October 15, 2019. VISD will begin and continue participation in grant orientation meetings, technical assistance meetings, other periodic meetings of grantees, and opportunities for sharing of best practices through the TEA program office. Victoria ISD Board of Trustees and the VISD Superintendent participate in the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) eXceptional Governance (XG) Governance Model as a whole-board learning experience that strengthens essential perspectives. (Cont. Attachment 1)

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Measurable Progress (Cont.)

Second-Quarter Benchmark

By January 2020, Victoria ISD's Board will have established organizational capacity and leadership to manage bold school action implementation (Partnership Model) and will continue to finalize communication materials. VISD will begin negotiations with the Early Childhood Partner around contract terms and performance expectations for the new school. Additionally, Victoria ISD will have conducted a series of community engagement meetings, staff meetings, family meetings, and board working session meetings to solicit input and feedback on the qualities that portray excellence in teaching and leading within VISD and meet the ACE Model program design. For possible ACE implementation, VISD will have developed local program and system structures to include the remaining four non-negotiable ACE pillars of Instructional Excellence, Extended School Day, Social and Emotional Support, and Parent and Community Partnerships. (Cont. Attachment 1)

Third-Quarter Benchmark

By March 2020, VISD will have finalized their performance agreement with their Early Childhood Partner, received board approval, ideally with unanimous support, both for the selected partner and of their performance agreement; VISD will have submitted the TX Partnership Benefits Application to TEA, and begun the application process to apply for any additional funding for bold school action (Implementation Continuation Funding) and for the partner (Charter Startup Funding). VISD will invite applicants to apply and will have conducted interviews, with the assistance of a a third party evaluator, to select the most effective teachers and leaders in the district and the ones who will fit the culture of the school community to teach and lead the Early Childhood campus. VISD will have offered stipends and other incentives during hiring conversations. VISD will begin the final process to be eligible for continuation funding, by preparing to submit and implementation plan using a TEA approved format and developed with the technical assistance provider by June 2020.

Project Evaluation and Modification

Describe how you will use project evaluation data to determine when and how to modify your program. If your benchmarks or summative SMART goals do not show progress, describe how you will use evaluation data to modify your program for sustainability.

Through the assistance of TEA's Technical Assistance (TA) Providers, VISD's school action fund project manager will be checking in on the progress of the key milestones and deliverables as according to TEA's Fidelity Implementation Tool (FIT). Through weekly conversations, VISD's Project Manager will be able to follow up on next steps and guidance from the TA provider and adjust course if off track. VISD's Assistant Superintendent will be meeting frequently with VISD's Superintendent and TEA's provided Executive Advisor (EA) to ensure that VISD is on track to meet all benchmark goals. VISD also intends on having to call special Board Working Sessions and multiple community meetings to ensure all key stakeholders are up to date and invested to ensure program success and sustainability. VISD's goal is ultimately to be able to secure Implementation Continuation Funding to support the implementation in the Fall of 2020 of the "Exploratory (Partnership/ACE)" bold school action that VISD will take to improve student achievement on an Early Childhood campus.

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For LEAs pursuing the Create a new school action model: The applicant assures that enrollment at a new school must prioritize

For LEAs pursuing the Partner-managed model: The applicant assures commitment to the Adoption of Model Authorizing policy

students attending or zoned to a 2018-2019 Comprehensive and/or Targeted school.

and participation in the Texas Authorizer Leadership Academy.

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Statutory Requirement

Please refer to the Program Guidelines page 9 and address the six questions below:

VISD will appoint Dr. Susanne Carroll, the Assistant Superintendent, to be the Grant Manager for the period of the Exploratory Grant to oversee the selection of the "best fit" bold School Action. Dr. Susanne Carroll will work closely with the TEA Matched Technical Assistance Provider and a project manager to ensure that all planning tasks are being implemented with fidelity and in a timely manner to carry out the school support and improvement activities. Dr. Carroll will work with an identified leadership team consisting of VISD personnel and Partnership leaders to develop a school improvement plan. First, they will establish a planning team consisting of members of the administration team, instructional staff, quidance counselor, reading specialist, parents, and community members. Then, the team will clarify their vision for school improvement in order to achieve meaningful change and improve student achievement for ALL students, regardless of their socio-economic status, racial background, or classification, such as ELL or SPED. Next, the team will create the school profile that will be a data-driven current state description of students, staff, community demographics that will help to identify strengths to build off of and challenges to focus on improving on the campus. Then, the planning team will gather and organize qualitative and quantitative data in the challenge focus areas identified. Finally, the team will conduct a data analysis to create the campus improvement plan that accurately and realistically addresses the key issues facing the campus. The team will produce a report that summarizes the data and drawn conclusions with specific actions needing to be taken. VISD will also consult with their Executive Advisor and other districts that have implemented similar bold actions such as San Antonio ISD, Midland ISD, Edgewood ISD, Dallas ISD, Galveston ISD, and Beaumont ISD.

2)

VISD will monitor schools schools receiving Title 1 - Part A funds through analyzing quantitative data such as enrollment numbers, teacher retention percentages, student retention percentages, average daily attendance rates, and quarterly academic achievement benchmark results; and through qualitative data from teacher evaluation comments, parent, student, and staff survey responses related to safety and culture and district staff classroom observations and school walk-throughs.

a)

VISD district leaders will be meeting with the principal at the Early Childhood campus regularly to review the progress towards goals for those outlined in the campus improvement plan. During these meetings, if there are goals that are lacking progress or activities with no evidence of implementation, then collaboratively, an action plan will be developed and carried out to ensure appropriate student growth.

b)

If there is unsuccessful implementation of the campus improvement plan after a year, then VISD leaders will plan around the school action and take bold measures to achieve student improvement. Given that ACE is the school action decided on for the Early Childhood campus, VISD will begin a data analysis district-wide to determine the most effective teachers and leaders and develop a plan to incentive those staff members to apply to teach at the campus. The current leaders and teachers on the campus will reapply for their positions to allow a fair and effective process for staffing a high quality campus that achieves adequate student growth, especially for sub-populations of students, in one year.

3)

VISD's Board adopted TEA's Model Authorizing Policy, ELA Local, (March, 2019) and agree to abide by this policy when recruiting, screening, selecting, and evaluating external partners. In establishing a Partnership, the District shall issue a local application designed to identify operating partners best qualified to meet the needs of the District. The Board shall consider an application if the applicant: 1. Meets the eligibility requirements for a campus charter in accordance with law; 2. Follows the application process established by the District; and 3. Provides assurances to the Board that the applicant will comply with the statutory and District requirements for a campus charter. The application process would include: 1. A comprehensive written application; 2. A rigorous review of the application by a charter application review committee; 3. A formal recommendation from the review committee to the Superintendent for approval or denial of each application; 4. A formal recommendation from the Superintendent to the Board for approval or denial of each application; and 5. A vote by the Board to approve or deny each application. (see Att. 1)

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Statutory Requirement (Cont'd)

4)

ISD leaders within the Program and Compliance and Finance offices will work closely together with VISD's District leadership and ne administrative leadership of the campus to ensure that all Federal, State, and Local resources to carry out the activities supported in the case of the case of the activities supported in the case of the case o							
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5)

VISD will modify, as appropriate, any practices and policies to provide operational flexibility that enables full and effective implementation of the plans. During frequent checkpoints in the planning process, stakeholders will be asked to identify and report on any practices and policies that would provide operational flexibility to implement the action. These practices and policies will be reviewed, and VISD leaders will ensure that changes are made to provide the necessary flexibility.

6

The "Exploratory Model" (Partnership/ACE) that VISD is pursuing for an Early Childhood school will incorporate several evidence-based strategies including:

- Effective Principals & Teachers: National research and best practices reflect that talented school leadership and highly effective teachers are essential in successful school turnaround initiatives. To that end, districts will focus on financially incentivizing the district's more effective teachers and principals into relocating/reconstituting the campuses of most need within the city's highest poverty communities. Principals are selected based on a track record of student success and positive campus culture, while teachers are identified as effective based on a statistical analysis of student assessment growth data along with administrator observations and subsequently invited to apply to teach at an ACE campus. To minimize the negative impact on campuses contributing their teachers to this initiative, no more than 4 teachers per campus were allowed to move to an ACE campus (unless incoming principal waives this control mechanism). Understanding new staff members will face additional challenges and professional responsibilities such as an extended school day, school enrichment, a generally more challenging environment, educators are offered stipends in addition to their base pay paid out over the year per the following table. Additionally, both teachers and principals are provided with additional days of professional development at the beginning of the year and several other PD opportunities are provided during the year.

-Instructional Excellence -Using 3-6 weeks interim assessments data, the school will structure Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to focus on curriculum alignment. (Cont. Attachment 1)

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TEA Program Requirements

TEA Program Requirement 1: Please identify one of the following eligible school action models. Once selected, please indicate whether the school action model will be district or partner managed. *Note: The district or partner managed option should only be selected if the LEA chooses from one of the following school action models: "Restart a struggling school" or "Create a new school". Additionally, the LEA may only select the partner-managed option for the "Replicate a successful school model".

Select one school action model below:	Select how model will be managed:
C Restart a struggling school	⊙ District-managed
Create a new school	O Partner-managed
C Replicate a successful school (must select Partner-managed option)	
C Reassign students from a struggling school (type of model management does not ap	oply)
© Exploratory planning (type of model management does not apply)	

TEA Program Requirement 2: Please describe the following:

a) Please describe the evaluation process and criteria utilized for selecting the school action model.

Superintendent, Quintin Shepherd, and Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Susanne Carroll, met with several other VISD leaders to make decisions on which comprehensive campus should remain open, which ones they should close, and how students might be reassigned. They based these decisions on data review, leadership meetings and input from campus leadership. VISD's Board of Trustees have been informed on a weekly basis through a weekly report called "Q's News" that is produced and shared with the Board and District Administrators; Additionally, VISD Board of Trustees have received communication regarding VISD's involvement with System of Great Schools through a monthly Administrative report that is first shared with the Board and then with all of VISD Administrators and posted on the website for community review; VISD then talked with TA Technical Assistance Providers about ACE and Early Childhood Partnerships and spoke with other districts who had pursued similar bold school action. VISD called the Comprehensive School campus leaders together to share the opportunity to pursue a "bold action" planning opportunity and discussed benefits and needs of each individual campus. During that meeting, one of the three remaining qualifying campuses decided to pursue the opportunity to re-start O'Connor elementary with an ACE Model. The district Administrative team decided to continue to pursue the opportunity for "exploratory" for an Early Childhood Partnership/ACE Model using a campus that would close during the 2019-20 school year. VISD leaders also participated in the TEA Replicating Great Options (RGO) presentation and listened in on the School Action Fund webinar to determine which innovative school improvement routes best fit within the vision of the district. Include any current parent, community, board input you received or plan on receiving in future.

Here are the actions VISD considered:

- -Re-start-District-managed (ACE Model)
- -Replicating Great Options (RGO) partner managed
- -New School Partner-managed (Pre-K 1882 Partnership with ESC/University prioritizing enrollment of students to enter Early Childhood campus in Fall 2020).

VISD will select actions that meet the following 3 criteria:

- 1. Those that significantly improve student achievement
- 2. Those that align with the VISD vision and district strategy and those that receive broad based support in the community including parents and local business leaders
- 3. Those that are sustainable and scalable

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TEA Program Requirements

b) Please describe the district vision for improving the campus(es) or engaging in a thoughtful planning process to implement a school action.

VISD's vision is "Every Child. Every Classroom. Every Day. - Achieving Excellence for ALL." VISD has five schools that were on the 2018-2019 Comprehensive Schools List serving several hundred students that have significant achievement gaps. VISD's vision for improvement is rooted in the district vision to ensure ALL students receive excellent instruction ALL day EVERY day, Victoria, Texas is located 30 miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico and the major highway connecting Mexico to Houston runs through Victoria bringing increased incidents of drug and human trafficking, gang activity, first generation English speaking families and increased poverty level workforce (National Drug Intelligence Center, 2016). Each of these factors contributes to higher numbers of dropouts, fewer college-bound graduates and a low-skilled, under-prepared workforce. VISD serves 14,303 students of which 66.97% (9,579) are low-income (free/reduced lunch), 44.42% (6,353) are atrisk for not graduating high school, 1.06% (152) are Bilingual, 5.94% (849) are Limited English Proficient, 3.45%, and 10.69% (1,529) are students with disabilities (TSDS PEIMS 2017-18 Fall). VISD approaches campus improvement by first focusing on adult improvement. The greatest strength in the VISD's approach to teacher and leadership development is the process for continuous conversation and collaboration between campuses and central office support personnel. VISD has an expectation that there are no silos of excellence, but a system of excellence across our 612 square miles. These expectations can be seen in our core values reflected in the acronym PROUD which stands for Pride in our Processes, Respecting Relationships, Outcomes of Success, Understanding ourselves and others, and Determined and Disciplined. Our success is directly dependent on how we grow and develop our people. VISD became a District of Innovation three years ago, and we are reshaping the student learning experience in Victoria ISD. VISD has an "Expertise Model of Support" focused on providing intentional knowledge and skills in the critical areas of support needed throughout the school district. These experts are identified by the role they serve throughout the district and the campus principals have direct contact to these experts to assist in immediately responding to their questions or concerns. (See Attachment 1 for extended response).

c) Please describe how the grant aligns to and accelerates the district's broader strategy and theory of action.

VISD's theory of action is one of a System of Great Schools. If the district devolves autonomy from the central administration to campuses; and if the district empowers parents to make choices; and if the district creates performance contracts with campuses; and if the district annually evaluates performance of and demand for high performing campuses; and if the district makes strategic decisions regarding growing access to high performing schools and addressing low performers; then campuses will be able to accomplish the Board's student outcome goals while operating within the Board's other constraints.

VISD was accepted into Cohort 3 of TEA's System of Great Schools, and this School Action Fund grant would provide funds and resources to support VISD to pursue the levers of Expanding Great Options, Improving Access to Options, and Empowering Autonomous Schools through transforming some of its lowest performing campuses into Partnership/ACE campuses.

d) Please identify the district staff member to coordinate the planning grant and the qualifications of the identified staff member.

Dr. Susanne Carroll is VISD's Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Accountability and will serve as oversight and planning for the SAF planning grant. Her qualifications can be found in her resume in Attachment 2.

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	ess and Participation	15/3				
Check the appropriate box below to indicate whether any barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups that receive services funded by this grant. The applicant assures that no barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups receiving services funded by this grant. Barriers exist to equitable access and participation for the following groups receiving services funded by this grant, as described below.						
Group		Barrier				
Group		Barrier				
Group	(r)	Barrier				
Group		Barrier				
PNP Equitable	e Services					
Are any private	Are any private nonprofit schools located within the applicant's boundaries?					
Yes	CNo		ं			
If you answered "No" to the preceding question, stop here. You have completed the section. Proceed to the next page. Are any private nonprofit schools participating in the grant? Yes No						
If you answered "No" to the preceding question, stop here. You have completed the section. Proceed to the next page.						
5A: Assurances						
The LEA assures that it discussed all consultation requirements as listed in Section 1117(b)(1) and/or Section 8501(c)(1), as applicable, with all eligible private nonprofit schools located within the LEA's boundaries. The LEA assures the appropriate Affirmations of Consultation will be provided to TEA's PNP Ombudsman in the manner and time requested.						
5B: Equitable	Services Calculation					
1. LEA's student	enrollment					
2. Enrollment of all participating private schools						
3. Total enrollment of LEA and all participating PNPs (line 1 plus line 2)						
4. Total current-year grant allocation						
5. LEA reservation for direct administrative costs, not to exceed the grant's defined limit						
6. Total LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 4 minus line 5)						
7. Per-pupil LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 6 divided by line 3)						
	LEA's total required	i ESSA P	NP equitable services reservation (line 7 times line 2)			

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Request for Grant Funds

List all of the allowable grant-related activities for which you are requesting grant funds. Include the amounts budgeted for each activity. Group similar activities and costs together under the appropriate heading. During negotiation, you will be required to budget your planned expenditures on a separate attachment provided by TEA.

PAYROLL COSTS (6100)	BUDGET
School Improvement and Accountability Project Manager (50%)	35,000
Extra-duty	10,000
PROFESSIONAL AND CONTRACTED SERVICES (6200)	
Technical Assistance Provider	75,000
Data Analysis and Evaluation	70,000
SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS (6300)	
Communication materials, copies, parent and community meeting resources, implementation resources.	40,000
OTHER OPERATING COSTS (6400)	
Professional Development	15,000
Travel for monthly/weekly grant meeting	15,000
Fravel for site visits, administration/board	25,000
APITAL OUTLAY (6600)	
Total Direct Costs	285,000
<u>Indirect Costs</u>	9,202
TOTAL BUDGET REQUEST (Direct Costs + Indirect Costs)	294,202